

**Augustana College
Chapel of Reconciliation**

Ben Hasche

28 March 2008

Grace and peace to you in the name of our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

It seems as if all my life I have eaten a piece of humble pie. Second place in the 6th grade spelling bee (how can you expect a 12 year-old to spell logarithm?!). Second chair in the baritone section. I never win at Skip-Bo against my mother, and have no recollection of ever beating my Grandma at Rummikub. Not to mention that I am a Cornhuskers football fan, a Twins fan (at least they both won something!) and, I'm afraid to admit, a Minnesota Vikings fan. In the 1998 NFC championship game against the Atlanta Falcons, I actually prayed to God as the game went into overtime to please allow the Vikings to win. This was their year. This was the year for the Viking faithful to end all of their merciless suffering, but God had other plans. It was the last time I actually cried over a sporting event. Yes, I cried. Can you believe it? Needless to say, I have never since prayed for one of my teams to win. However, I have learned to enjoy the process—the ups and downs of each season.

I believe that my childhood naïveté showed me why for years I have struggled with sin, why “I do not understand what I do,” why “I do not do what I want to do, but what I hate to do.” Growing up, I believed that what I wanted was what God wanted, whether or not I could admit that. Whatever I did, I wanted to be the best—we’re talking straight A student, star on the Hot Stuff Pizza traveling basketball team, spelling bee champion, baritone prodigy. Thus, as it came time to prove myself, all of the added pressure of “God wants this for me” came crumbling down on top of me. Never was this truer than in band auditions. No matter how hard I worked, it always felt like I was playing the material I prepared for weeks for the first time. I always ended up eating more than my fair share of humble pie. I took things like not making All-State band, not being first chair, not being a starter on the varsity basketball team, and not getting an A on my big Economics test personally. Then, I made a beautiful discovery. I really credit this discovery to my education at Augustana College—in all of my learning, for I believe that it strengthened my faith.

The first discovery is that we have God’s laws to keep us sane.
The second is that we have Christ’s love to give us hope.

Reflecting on God’s laws—his commandments—they are there to point out our sin. Paul states that when we sin, it is no longer we who commit the sin, but the sin living in us that does it. How did I react to my continuous failures (I as I believed they were)? I reacted harshly to God. I felt as if he was hollow and cruel. I had no trust in

Him. As I look back, I am ashamed of my shallowness. I never had to deal with the death of a loved one, a debilitating injury or illness, or suffer prejudice or live in fear of my life. I lived in a nice home, had a loving family, and plenty of God-given talent. But I did not have faith in God. I always knew he was there, but my lack of faith in Him always led me to sin. At times, I still see and feel it happen to me today. This lack of faith, I believe, is the evil that Paul is talking about in his message to the Romans. I want to do what God wants me to do, yet I do not do it. The law always points that out to me. If I were to listen to the law alone, it would keep showing me that I have fallen short of God's glory.

Even when I do good, such as volunteer at a local soup kitchen or sub for someone at work, there is always that cruel, evil voice in the back of my mind saying, "But you're not doing good enough." It was that voice—the war that is within my mind—that led me to always question God when I wasn't getting what I wanted. I always wanted to serve God, but the law was always showing me how short I was falling of His glory. This war was honestly eating me alive inside. Not knowing where to turn, I miraculously fell back to my baptism. Before I knew what good and evil were, before the battle within me raged on, before I knew God, God knew me. That is why I was baptized. The waters of baptism wash out my sin, and I start every day with a clean slate.

This brings us to the latter discovery—that Christ's love gives us hope. Christ did not come into the world to condemn us—the law already does that—but that "whoever believeth in Him may have eternal life." His death on the cross confirms that. Paul's letter to the Colossians really comes into perspective. Since we have been claimed by Christ in our baptism, we should "set [our] hearts on things from above." The earthly things I have a passion for—sports, band, the study of business and economics—I do for the glory of God. That doesn't mean I won't fail. Just ask Dr. Nesiba about that. However, that doesn't mean I have to fail. I have been freed from death, from sin, so that I am free to live. Thus, I practice for upcoming concerts and study for the next big test and work out to stay in shape. When the time comes to prove myself, such as in a concert or on an exam or at the free throw line, I know that it is no longer I that have anything left to prove. My performance is in God's hands. We say it every time in the Lord's Prayer: "Thy will be done." So, do not live in fear of failure, do not dwell in sin, and do not listen to that voice telling you that you are not doing good enough. For Christ took all of our doubts, our failures, and our sin to the cross. Seated at the right hand of the Father, we will also appear with him in glory.

Having received the good news of the resurrection last week, let us live out our lives freely.

Amen.

MORNING WORSHIP
Friday, March 28, 2008

Prelude Megan Hasche

Welcome/Announcements Pr. Paul
Invocation

Call to Worship Jesson Vogt

L: Christ came to earth and taught us to love one another.

C: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

L: Christ hung on the cross so that we might be redeemed.

C: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

L: Christ overcame death, so that we may have eternal life.

C: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

L: Having been assured freedom from death and sin, let us live
freely to love and serve our neighbors.

C: **Amen. Thanks be to God!**

Hymn *“Great is Thy Faithfulness”* ELW 733

Scripture Romans 7:14-25
Colossians 3:1-4
Evan Kulesa

Message Ben Hasche
Hometown: Sioux Falls, SD
Major: Economics Minor: History

Hymn *“Here I am Lord”* ELW 574

Prayers/Lord’s Prayer Jesson Vogt

Benediction Pr. Paul
Dismissal

Postlude Megan Hasche

CAMPUS MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

“WHAT CATHOLICS AND LUTHERAN HAVE IN COMMON” - a discussion led by Chris Bergwald of the Catholic Diocese and Pr. Paul. **Tuesday, Apr. 1 - 7 pm - chapel.** Everyone is welcome!

UNITY PRAYER - There will be an offering of prayer for the community every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 7:00am in the Back Alley and Sundays at 9:00pm at the Valhalla Theme House (1000 W. 28th St.). **All members of the Augustana community are invited to attend.**

CHAPEL CALENDAR

Sun. (30 th)	Worship, 11 am - Pr. Paul
Mon. (31 th)	Worship, 10 am - Mike Nitz, Communications
Tues. (1 st)	Catholic Mass, 10 am - Fr. Shane Stevens, St. Joseph's Cathedral
Wed. (2 nd)	Holy Communion, 10 am - Lindsay Twa, Art. Dept.
Fri. (4 th)	Worship, 10 am - BryAnn Becker, Sr. Spkr.
Sun. (6 th)	Worship, 11 am - Sweet Fellowship Outreach Team